

VZCZCXRO8864  
RR RUEHPA  
DE RUEHOU #0272/01 1011457  
ZNY CCCCC ZZH  
R 101457Z APR 08  
FM AMEMBASSY OUAGADOUGOU  
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC 3533  
INFO RUEHZK/ECOWAS COLLECTIVE  
RHEHNSC/NSC WASHDC  
RUCNDT/USMISSION USUN NEW YORK 0627  
RHMFISS/CDR USAFRICOM STUTTGART GE

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 OUAGADOUGOU 000272

SIPDIS

SIPDIS

E.O. 12958: DECLASSIFY ON 04/10/2028  
TAGS: [PREL](#) [PGOV](#) [EAID](#) [KDEM](#) [UV](#) [IV](#)  
SUBJECT: French DCM on Cote d'Ivoire Peace Process

REF: (A) ABIDJAN 00194

(B) 07 OUAGADOUGOU 0892  
(C) OUAGADOUGOU 0037

Classified by Amb. J Jackson for reason 1.4 (b) (d)

11. (C) Summary: The French DCM told us April 8 that progress at the latest round of Cote d'Ivoire peace talks held March 21 in Ouagadougou was modest, with good results in issuing almost 500,000 birth certificates to identify Ivorian citizens, but little success in disarming northern Cote d'Ivoire and reestablishing government authority. President Compaore invited several new observers to this round of talks, and donors agreed to pay for some costs related to disarming former rebels and the Presidential election, which is now likely to be held at the end of 2008 at the earliest. End Summary.

12. (SBU) DCM called on French Embassy DCM Xavier Brun on April 8 to hear French views on the March 21 meeting of the Committee to Evaluate and Accompany (CEA) to the Ouagadougou Political Accord (OPA). France was represented at the meeting by the head of its Africa Bureau, its Ambassador based in Abidjan, and Brun (notetaker). Wanda Nesbitt, U.S. Ambassador to Cote d'Ivoire, visited Ouagadougou to cover the CEA meeting (ref A). Burkina Faso President Blaise Compaore, the OPA Facilitator, invited new countries and international organizations to attend this latest CEA round:

-- Norway (which Brun said had contributed money to fund the Abidjan office of Compaore's special representative for the OPA, Boureima Badini);  
-- Belgium (which Compaore was hopeful would contribute money to the OPA process);  
-- Brazil (which plans to open an Embassy in Ouagadougou in the wake of President Lula's visit here last fall (ref B)); and the  
-- Organization of the Islamic Conference (whose 11th session Compaore attended in Dakar in early March, and whose representative at the CEA called for a free and fair Presidential election in Cote d'Ivoire).

Brun noted that the Catholic Church-affiliated NGO, "Community of Sant'Egidio" had been at the January 14 CEA meeting (ref C), but was absent this time.

Progress in OPA Slows Down ...  
-----

13. (C) Brun said that, while there had been no open discord among participants, this CEA round had been less productive than the previous. Because the OPA process had started to "stagnate," the French assessment was that the earliest date when Presidential elections could be held had slipped to the

end of 2008. This reflected, Brun felt, the relative paucity of progress on the ground in Cote d'Ivoire, with:

- insufficient reimplantation of Cote d'Ivoire Government (GOCI) Customs and other officials into the north, where former "Forces Nouvelles" rebels continue to levy "taxes";
- limited progress on disarmament of the ex-rebels, who are hesitating to turn in their weapons; and,
- no response from the GOCI so far to Compaore's proposal providing quotas and ranks for integrating ex-rebels into the armed forces.

14. (SBU) Another major stumbling block, and a focus of discussions at this CEA round, was how to pay for the peace process and elections, Brun said. Ivorian Prime Minister Guillaume Soro "pleaded" with donors for funding to cover the cost of the:

- contract with SAGEM (the French technical operator chosen to produce ID and voter registration cards);
- Presidential elections; and the
- GOCI's debt arrears.

Soro also reiterated his earlier call for Ivorian political parties and civil society to adhere to a "code of good behavior" during the Presidential campaign and election, Brun added.

But Modest Progress Still Achieved

15. (C) Brun emphasized, however, that one OPA success story had been the issuance of almost 500,000 birth certificates through the work of the "audiences foraines" (mobile tribunals for identification). Brun explained that the representative of opposition leader Alassane Ouattara's

OUAGADOUGO 00000272 002 OF 002

Rally for Democracy and Development (RDD) had lobbied at the CEA for the extension, beyond three months, of the period during which each of over 100 "audience foraines" would operate. The RDD wanted this extension in hopes of identifying more voters in the north, Brun explained, but there was no consensus at the CEA in favor of an extension, and this proposal was dropped.

16. (C) Other modest signs of progress at the meeting, Brun added, were:

- a reaffirmation by all signatories of the importance of holding Presidential elections as soon as possible;
- agreement by the donors to help cover the cost of the elections (but not the cost of the SAGEM contract or debt arrears);
- willingness by donors to finance part of the costs of ex-rebel demobilization, disarmament and reinsertion (DDR) (but not the rebels' salary stipends, which have only been partially paid); and,
- a GOCI decree outlining the terms of cooperation between SAGEM and the National Institute of Statistics in drawing up voter lists.

17. (SBU) Brun closed by expressing appreciation for the "efficient" work of the UN Special Representative for Cote d'Ivoire, Y.J. Choi, whom he felt did a fine job of consulting with donors over lunch and then explaining well to the signatories what the donors would be willing to pay for.

JACKSON